

COPING WITH TRAUMATIC EVENTS

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Hello. I'm Dr. Rodney Hammond with the Injury Center at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tragedies, such as the April 2007 shootings on the Virginia Tech campus, affect all of us in different ways. Some people might react to the stress immediately, while others may not react until later. Some people may feel higher levels of fear or relive past violent experiences.

It's common for people who have experienced a tragedy to feel a sense of loss, helplessness, or numbness for a period of time. They may feel nervous or on edge. Some people may have troubling memories and difficulty sleeping or concentrating. Many may not recognize that these reactions are related to the stressful event.

If you've experienced a traumatic event, talk about your experiences and get support from family, friends, and co-workers. Other places to seek support include faith-based or volunteer organizations, such as the American Red Cross.

It's important to take care of yourself by following your normal routine. Avoid using alcohol and drugs, which can suppress your feelings. Helping other people or volunteering in your community can help you feel better.

Keep in mind that returning to the way you felt before the event may take some time. If your distress continues, or if you have trouble managing your feelings, talk to a psychologist, social worker, or professional counselor.

For more information, go to the CDC website at CDC.gov.

[Announcer] To access the most accurate and relevant health information that affects you, your family and your community, please visit www.cdc.gov.